

SCP
3813
PRICE ONE PENNY.

EDWARD S. MORRIS,
AND
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR AFRICA.

THE STORY OF A MAN WITH A MISSION. WITH SOME
ACCOUNT OF THE NEGRO REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA.



BY ALFRED S. DYER, Author of a "A Hero from the Forge," &c.

LONDON :

DYER BROTHERS, 21, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1879.

May be ordered through any Bookseller.

MAP SHOWING THE POSITION
OF
THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA.



“CHRISTIAN LIBERIA, THE HOPE OF THE DARK CONTINENT,” by Alfred S. Dyer, from which the following narrative is condensed, is published by Dyer Brothers, 21, Paternoster Square, London, price Sixpence, bound in limp cloth.



EDWARD S. MORRIS,

AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR AFRICA.

~~~~~

**T**O the majority of British Christians, the negro Republic of Liberia has hitherto been little more than a geographical spot on the world's map. But it can be so no longer. Viewed in its relation to the evangelization of the Dark Continent, it assumes a new importance and interest. In that light, it becomes the centre of new hopes, and its future the object of fervent prayer.

It is now about sixty years ago that the American Colonization Society planted a settlement of free negroes at Cape Mesurado, on the west coast of Africa. What were the motives which actuated the founders of that Society it is unnecessary particularly to enquire. Doubtless many were prompted by the purest feelings of Christian philanthropy, although it is evident that others were anxious only to rid the slaveholding States of the free negro—an unwelcome element in their midst. But the gold in the combination must not be held responsible for the presence of the alloy. The Society continued its work. Six hundred miles of the coast were purchased. Settlements were multiplied in close proximity to each other, which in 1839 united as a commonwealth. Eight years later this union gave place to a republic on the basis of universal suffrage, and with institutions almost identical with those of the great Saxon commonwealth of the Western World.

The experiment of a nation of black men governing themselves on the lines of enlightened Christian civilization has been an ample and gratifying success. The history of the Republic of Liberia during the more than thirty years of its existence, has been one of quiet progress, notwithstanding that it has had to labour under many disadvantages. The population of Liberia at the present time is estimated at one million aboriginal inhabitants and twenty thousand Americo-Liberians. Besides common and high schools, there are more than fifty places of Christian worship. Monrovia, the capital and largest town, picturesquely situated on a hill by the sea-side, which commands magnificent views of the surrounding country, numbers about seven thousand inhabitants. Thus in the providence and under the blessing of God, on those western shores of Africa a nation which rejoices in all the blessings of Christian civilization and good government, has grown up, where before were only the habitations of darkness and cruelty. And not only so. Strong, earnest, and loving hearts are looking to Liberia as a prepared vantage ground for the evangelization of the vast regions beyond, as "the open door to heathen Africa" and, in a climate so fatal to white men, as the hope of the Dark Continent through the agency of her own sons.

After these years of progress and preparation, the time has come for Liberia to enter upon her great mission. At the right moment, just when this small nationality is ripe for the work which infinite wisdom seems to have assigned to it, the attention of British Christians is being forcibly drawn to Liberia by one who may well be termed its apostle.

During the early part of the late civil war in North America, the night and day thoughts of Edward S. Morris of Philadelphia were absorbed in the future of the negroes whose emancipation he believed could not be far distant. While he meditated, the fire burned. So engrossed did he become, that he could think of little else. Before the war he had travelled in the Southern States, and been horrified at seeing his fellow-beings—some of them nearly

as white as himself—sold, amidst all the accompaniments of brutality, at public auction. He foresaw, what has since been so sadly realized, how the freed negroes would be victimized and oppressed by their former masters.

At length the possibilities of Liberia broke in upon his absorbed mind like a flood of light. Here was a civilized community of their own race, speaking the English language, blessed with the Christian religion, where such of the freedmen as might wish to escape from their former degrading associations, and the tyranny of their former masters, might earn an honest livelihood and make a home, and where they would be welcomed with outstretched arms.

Possessed of a practical mind, he studied the natural products of the country, to ascertain its capabilities of giving remunerative employment to a greatly increased population. He found the soil luxuriant in fertility. His experience as a man of business in Philadelphia enabled him to see that the native Liberian coffee was the finest in the world's market. Solicitous that the commerce and the industrial pursuits of the republic should be established on a legitimate and durable foundation, he at once determined to set himself to encourage the cultivation of coffee in the place of cotton, which can be grown there far less advantageously, and of the sugar-cane, the production of which is an incentive to the production of rum.\*

Up to that time the great impediment to the remunerative cultivation of Liberian coffee had been, that (differing from other species of coffee) it required to be "hulled," or divested of a husk, which had hitherto been done by the slow process of hand-labour. To overcome this difficulty Edward Morris invented a machine to hull at the rate of a bushel a minute.

To further advance his purpose he resolved to visit Liberia in person. He landed there in the last week of

---

\*It may not be known to all that rum is obtained by distillation from the fermented skimmings of sugar-boilers, the drainings of sugar-pots and hogsheads, and from the refuse of sugar-making generally.

1862. On the ever memorable morning of the following New Year's Day, when five millions of negroes in the United States awoke to freedom, he stood up in the capital of Liberia to speak on the object of his mission.

How successful his efforts were in turning the tide from the growth of the sugar-cane and the manufacture of rum to the cultivation of coffee, may be inferred from the following passages from a letter written to him by Abraham Hanson, United States Commercial Agent at Monrovia. He says—"Be assured that by your public addresses, by your private intercourse, and by the agitation on the subject of the growth of coffee, etc., you have inspired a confidence, zeal and energy, in the minds of Liberian citizens, which will put new vigour into their arms, and fresh courage into their hearts. You have tinged their horizon with a golden hue which they had not seen before, and now they address themselves to their daily toil in the joyful assurance that they do not labour in vain, nor spend their strength for naught. I am acquainted with several persons who intend at once to enlarge their operations, and I have conversed with some men of capital and indomitable enterprise, who propose, for the first time, to engage in the cultivation of coffee, as the result of the impetus and inspiration of your intercourse and labours . . . . . The enthusiasm is intense. Along the rivers, down the coast, in every settlement, and on every farm, a thrill of new delight has been felt, and the work has been already commenced, which shall introduce this people to a state of true dignity and independence. Allow me to record my honest and deep conviction that Liberia is destined to be the free and happy home of millions of the descendants of Africa, who shall return hither from the house of bondage, and live in the full enjoyment of the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The above letter is not more sanguine in its expectations than another from C. C. Hoffman, a Christian Missionary at Cape Palmas, Liberia, who thus writes—"I desire to express to you the great pleasure I feel, in

common with others, in your efforts to develop the agricultural resources of Liberia, especially in the cultivation of coffee ... . From one end of Liberia to the other, you have been regarded as her benefactor, and everywhere sincerely welcomed with gratitude and affection ... . All classes of the community have been aroused. The poor widow as well as the prosperous merchant and the far-seeing statesman, have been cheered by the prospect you have opened for individual benefit and the country's prosperity. A new era now opens in the history of Liberia ... . Is not the hand of the Almighty in all this, who is preparing a way for the exiled to return?"

To set an example to home enterprise, with characteristic energy, Edward Morris acquired eight hundred acres of land on the St. Paul's river, near Monrovia, and commenced the cultivation of coffee and the manufacture of palm oil, indigo, lime juice, arrowroot, and palm soap. In connection with this estate, he introduced the first steamboat that had ever plied upon the St. Paul's river.

On his return to Philadelphia he started *The Liberia Advocate*, a monthly journal, which he printed in advance in America, and dispatched to Monrovia in time for it to appear on the day of the date on its title-page. The motto which he chose for this journal, "Christian Liberia, the open door to heathen Africa," explains the spirit which pervaded its pages during the five years of its issue. His object was to make it subservient to the great purpose of extending the knowledge of the Gospel to the interior of Africa, while at the same time encouraging those industries which would tend to the true prosperity of the nation.

An illustration or two of the methods he adopted to promote the usefulness of *The Liberia Advocate* in those directions will be interesting.

In the opening number for 1874, appeared an Arabic editorial addressed to the native Mohammedan Chiefs of the Interior, expressing a desire to send them Christian teachers as well as to trade with them. This

was extensively circulated, and subsequently a very encouraging and fraternal answer was received from a Chief in the valley of the Niger, who said—"I love the Toura and the Ingil (the Old and New Testaments) and would like them to be taught to our boys. Our religion is widespread; our laws are just, but we have not the Bible. Some of us have only heard of it in the Koran. I have seen it and read it and understood it, and I should like it to be sent to our country." It is worthy of notice, as an evidence of the high culture of some of the citizens of Liberia, that this editorial article was translated into Arabic, and the Arabic answer into English, by Edward W. Blyden, LL.D., an accomplished negro scholar, who is now the representative of Liberia at the British Court.

A brief extract from a letter from an ex-President of the Liberian Republic may be quoted as a further indication of the practical religious spirit which pervaded *The Liberia Advocate*. Writing from Monrovia in the autumn of 1876, Ex-President D. B. Warner said—"I was very much interested by the article headed 'The ancient glory of the negro race,' and readily fell in with the opinion of others that it was doubtless the impression of its author when penning it, that it would be read with pride—with grave and impressive interest by every true-hearted negro who loves his ancestral home above any other country. It contains historical facts with which every negro should be made acquainted, *and thus be encouraged to unite his best endeavours with those of others of his race to Christianize Africa*, and regain her ancient and long-lost glory."

Viewed in its other aspect—in the encouragement which it gave to useful industries—*The Liberia Advocate* appears to have been conducted with a large amount of good sense, seasoned with not a little sanctified good humour.\* Among six editorials in one number on Liberian products (in which of course coffee had the

---

\* The price to subscribers was one bushel of unhulled coffee per annum.



first place) was one on “Soap,” which began—“Soap is the difference between civilization and barbarism. It is the distinguishing feature of enlightenment. The savage never uses soap!” Then followed some useful advice in regard to making it. An advertisement in the same issue displayed a happy idea in a practical form. It would be difficult to conceive a plan better adapted to encourage the production of coffee in a new country than an offer such as the following:—

**ALL WHO WANT**

Provisions, Dry Goods, Hardware, Agricultural Implements, Garden Seeds, Sewing Machines, Parlour Organs, Hand Sugar Mills, Books, Notions, Steam Engines, Saw Mills, Caustic Soda or Lye in drums,

**EVERYTHING BUT RUM,**

Can now be supplied—not for cash or drafts, but for well-dried

**UNHULLED COFFEE.**

☞ Upon the receipt in Philadelphia of ONE HUNDRED BUSHELS or more of UNHULLED COFFEE, picked when RED RIPE, the UNDERSIGNED will forward by first opportunity ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS WORTH or more of any of the above named articles—except the POISON! ☞ H. W. Dennis, Monrovia, will box and forward the unhulled Coffee to

**EDWARD S. MORRIS,**

No. 129, South Front Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

When it was decided to hold the American Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia, the Government of Liberia at once appointed Edward Morris as its Commissioner, but eventually found itself unable to carry out its purpose of exhibiting. Determined, however, that such an opportunity of bringing the products of that country before public notice should not be lost, Edward S. Morris & Co. resolved to represent Liberia at their own expense. That resolution was carried out handsomely, and secured the award to Liberia of two medals. In a space of 1536 square feet, they made a display which elicited the astonished encomiums of the American press, and did much to

call attention to the religious importance as well as to the material progress of Liberia. Side by side with exhibits of coffee, palm oil, palm soap, arrowroot, &c., was a picture frame containing the photographs of ten native African boys then in course of training near Philadelphia, as teachers of their heathen countrymen. These portraits were in two series, one series representing the boys before they were sent to school, and the other after they had undergone a two years' course of education. The contrast was remarkable, and was visible equally in the more gracefully rounded outlines of their features and in the beaming intelligence which shone from their faces since their introduction to the beneficent influences of Christian society.

Suspended above the exhibition of Liberian produce was a large canvas, on which was a representation of a stalwart African, over whose head were the words—"The Cry of Africa to the Freedmen of America!" and below his feet the line—"Come over and help us!" Thus, as the *New York Illustrated Christian Weekly* remarked, a moral and religious element was added to the material inducements to Americans of African descent to press on to Liberia—to emigrate for the good of others as well as for their own benefit.

The feeling which Liberia's display actually engendered in the minds of the freedmen who saw it, may be inferred from the remark of one of them to the Commissioner—"Can you send me to Liberia? If not, I'll strip and swim across!"

A glance at the map will show the important position which Liberia occupies in relation to the vast regions of Central Africa. As the Liberian territory was once the centre of the Slave-trade, the place whence captured negroes were exported to all the horrors of foreign slavery, so it now seems fitted and destined to become the centre of negro immigration to the districts formerly depopulated by that terrible traffic. But how different the immigrant to the exile!

It is not generally understood in Great Britain what a

burning desire has recently sprung up among American freedmen to settle in the land of their forefathers. The best authorities on the subject in the United States believe that half a million of coloured people are actually intending removal to Africa as their home at the earliest possible opportunity. The American Colonization Society, which is now doing a really admirable work, states that "Largely increased numbers of the intelligent and enterprising portion of the coloured population are contemplating emigration to Liberia. The demand upon the Colonization Society, growing more and more pressing, and coming from every quarter, for information about the Republic and the means of settlement there, far exceeds anything of the kind in its history." There is no suspicion of outside pressure now to accelerate their removal. This great movement is a spontaneous one. Nor is it surprising that, being free, many feel drawn to a country which is ruled entirely by their own race; where they can enjoy all the blessings of free institutions without the possibility of the colour of their skin being in any way a bar to their interests; where they will be eagerly welcomed; and where the Government offers a free grant of twenty-five acres of land to every male adult immigrant.

Exodus Associations, altogether independent of the American Colonization Society and its kindred organizations, are being formed by the freedmen of the United States to enable them to emigrate to Liberia. An early number of *The African Repository* for 1879, contains an account of the first vessel which sailed as the result of such spontaneous action. Two hundred and seventy-five persons of both sexes and all ages embarked at Charleston in a craft of 400 tons burden, which had been purchased at Boston by the Liberia Joint Stock Steamship Company, incorporated under the laws of the State of South Carolina, and composed entirely of men of African descent. The ship was dedicated to its special mission by a religious service, and two Christian Churches (Methodist and Baptist) were instituted among the emigrants before the

vessel left Charleston. On its arrival at Monrovia, the leading citizens convened a meeting in the City Hall, to give the new comers a public welcome. Thus the United States is providing "farmers, mechanics, and merchants allied in blood and race to the indigenous inhabitants, who can furnish not only the song, the prayer, and the sermon, but the singers, teachers, and preachers who can live in that country. Agriculture and commercial operations, and the example of well-regulated domestic life, may exemplify and enforce the teachings of the heralds of the Gospel."

The religious element in this Exodus enterprise is one of the most hopeful auguries of the future. The Christian Churches of America have worked so nobly on behalf of the negro race since their emancipation on that continent, that emigrants to Africa must always be, for the most part, an intelligent, religious, and (allowing for their past disadvantages) an educated people.

Happily also, a glowing missionary spirit has manifested itself in Fisk University and in other similar institutions for the higher education of young Christian freedmen in the United States; and already the first fruits of this militant zeal are in the mission field. When one contemplates the stupendous results which may flow from such a missionary movement among the negroes themselves, the words which come naturally to the lips are "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord!" Hitherto, the fatality of the climate to white men has made the history of African missions to a large extent a history of catastrophes, relieved by heroism worthy of the first ages of the Church. Especially has that been the case in the western portion of Africa, where eleven out of seventeen European missionaries recently died in one year. But negroes, whether born on that continent or not, can live and labour with comparative impunity in districts which become the grave of their white fellow-men. "Africans," says Dr. Moffat, "must go to teach and to save Africans." The capabilities of black men being now a matter of certainty instead of speculation, Christian

philanthropists are recognising that "the final factor in the solution of the African problem must be the negro himself." With this conclusion; with the willingness, nay, with the anxiety of the negro to consecrate himself to the work; and with a vantage ground for effort such as the negro republic of Liberia affords, a new and brighter epoch opens in the evangelization of the Dark Continent. Hope revives. Faith is strengthened. Enthusiasm returns in the fulness and power of its first glow.

The horizon widens. Liberia, populated by an intelligent, educated, and, above all, Christian people, of the same race as those of the great continent which stretches out beyond it, is reaching forth its arms to open up the vast and teeming regions of the country to legitimate commerce. American freedmen—themselves permeated with Christian teaching—are swelling the numbers and strengthening the resources of the West African republic. Other American freedmen are giving themselves as ambassadors of the Gospel to the land from which their heathen forefathers were torn. And no less a source of hope are the measures that are being taken to secure a combined religious and industrial education to native children of Africa, and especially to the sons of African Chiefs. To the carrying out of this work, Edward Morris, after having given an important impetus, as we have seen, to the commercial prosperity of Liberia, is now devoting himself with truly apostolic fervour.

The African Chief before mentioned who said he should like his boys to be taught the Old and New Testaments, affords but one illustration of the prevalent willingness to receive instruction. Edward Morris has frequently conversed with Chiefs and Headmen from the rear of Liberia, who have asked him to teach their boys. The willingness to receive instruction on the part of the lads themselves, often amounts to an absolute thirst for knowledge. Edward Morris says that on one occasion he was standing on the beach at Monrovia, the day before his return to America, when an African boy, half bent in adoration, approached him, and said—"You God-man,

take me big America ; big ship !” When asked “ What for ? ” he replied—“ Me learn big English you ! ” In consequence of Edward Morris’ enervated state, the result of over-work, he was obliged to say “ No, ” whereupon the little fellow immediately drew from the folds of a cloth around him, two baby leopards, with unopened eyes, which he must have captured at the risk of his life, and presenting them said—“ Me give him ; you take me big America ; big ship ; learn big English ! ” The child had endangered his life to earn a passage to America, solely to gain the much-coveted education.

The school which Edward Morris proposes to establish for the sons of African Chiefs, may be termed an industrial boarding school. A primary feature in the scheme is to teach the boys agriculture, and to accustom them especially to the cultivation of coffee. Coffee planting will form a part of their daily duties as much as reading or writing, or any other branch of ordinary instruction. By this means not only will education (as ordinarily understood) be imparted, but the boys will acquire industrial habits and a taste for settled and civilized occupations, so that when they return to their homes and succeed to the position of their fathers, it may reasonably be expected that they will discourage heathenish customs, raise their respective tribes in the scale of civilization, and, best of all, create the conditions which will make the messengers of the Gospel welcome in their midst. Such a plan, if carried out in dependence upon the Divine blessing, must produce changes and results of the greatest magnitude and the most momentous importance.

A school for girls is also in contemplation, as well as other industrial schools for the children of natives generally.

These are the aims in which Edward Morris desires to enlist the sympathy of British Christians. They are such as may well stir the old anti-slavery spirit of the country. Among the first who interested themselves in his project on his arrival in England was one whose name

is historic in connection with efforts for the welfare of the negro—Samuel Gurney. Edward Morris held his inaugural meeting on this side of the Atlantic in the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association, Aldersgate Street, London, under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury. This meeting prepared the way for his introduction to many other leading philanthropists, and among those who are now taking an active interest in his mission are representative Christian men like R. C. Morgan (editor of *The Christian*), George Sturge, T. A. Denny, George Williams, Edwin O. Tregelles, T. B. Smithies (editor of *The British Workman*), Samuel Gurney Sheppard, Joseph Cooper, J. Bevan Braithwaite, and the venerable Dr. Moffat.

Edward Morris asks for a thousand pounds to carry out his plans, but it is to be hoped that this sum will not be the measure of the interest of British Christians in so great and noble a work. May their response to his appeal on behalf of Africa be worthy of themselves and of the magnificent ends which are sought to be attained. And so, by this and other agencies, in co-operation with the Churches of America, aided by the militant virtue in the Churches of Liberia itself, may the negro republic become such a centre of good as shall surpass all our dreams and hopes, and magnify the grace of God in planting on the western shores of Africa, a people destined to be the instrument in His hands of lighting up the deepest recesses of the Dark Continent.



\* \* Contributions to the Liberia School-house Fund should be sent to JOSEPH GURNEY BARCLAY, 54, Lombard Street, London.

## PENNY POPULAR BIOGRAPHIES.

---



*These Biographies are handsomely printed on toned paper, are copyright, and are uniform in size as well as in price. They are always in print, new editions being issued as occasion requires.*

---

By ALFRED S. DYER.

A HERO FROM THE FORGE, a Biographical Sketch of Elihu Burritt. With Portrait.

FROM BEFORE THE MAST TO THE PLATFORM : A popular Biography of William Ladd, the eminent American Philanthropist. With Portrait.

C. H. SPURGEON, the Great Metropolitan Preacher. A Biographical Tribute. With Portrait.

By H. EUSTACE REYD.

ROBERT MOFFAT, D. D., an Example of Missionary Heroism. With Portrait.

GEORGE MÜLLER, and the Orphan Homes at Ashley Down. With Portrait.

By J. P. HUTCHINSON.

JOHN BRIGHT, the Tribune of the People. With Portrait.

By WILLIAM CATCHPOOL.

JOSEPH STURGE, the Champion of Peace, Freedom, and Reform. With Portrait.

By GEO. H. DYER.

RICHARD COBDEN, the Friend of the People. The Story of his Life told for Popular Reading. With Portrait.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, the Great American Anti-Slavery Leader. With Portrait.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON; his Life, his Humour, and his Mission. With Portrait.

LEVI COFFIN, the Friend of the Fugitive Slave. (The "Simeon Halliday" of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.) With Portrait.

---

LONDON : DYER BROTHERS, 21, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

*May be ordered through any Bookseller.*